

St Albans Steiner Kindergarten

Fleetville Community Centre, Royal Road, Hatfield Road, ST ALBANS, Hertfordshire,
AL1 4LQ



Inspection date	13 December 2016
Previous inspection date	19 May 2016

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Requires Improvement	3
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Good	2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Good	2
Outcomes for children		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- The provider has made improvements since their last inspection. They have ensured that Ofsted has been provided with the necessary information to enable them to carry out suitability checks on newly appointed nominated individuals. The provider has improved the support available for staff to enable them to develop their practice.
- Staff's practice and ongoing performance are effectively evaluated through appraisals and supervision meetings. They access specific training that enables them to further develop their knowledge and skills.
- Children settle quickly into the routine at the setting. Many children first attend the weekly parent and toddler sessions, which help them make close bonds with staff.
- Parents speak very highly of the setting and share their views about the positive influence it has on their children's lives. They comment how staff have created a calm and welcoming atmosphere.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Staff complete regular and thorough assessments of children's progress, however, best use is not made of this information to target specific next steps in learning in order to support children to make even more rapid progress.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- strengthen the use of information gathered from assessments to provide children with more specific next steps in learning that enable them to make even more rapid progress.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector completed observations of planned activities. She discussed the intentions of the activities with the manager and spoke to all members of staff.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and looked at relevant documentation, such as the policies and procedures and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the setting.
- The inspector looked at children's assessments records and planning documentation, and discussed these with staff.
- The inspector spoke to parents and children during the inspection and took account of their views.

Inspector

Michelle Baldock

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff have a secure knowledge of the signs and symptoms that might raise concerns about children's safety and welfare. They know the procedures to follow and who to contact in their local authority should the need arise. The management team evaluates its practice and the activities offered to children. They gather the views of parents and children and incorporate these into their plans for improvement. Staff have built good relationships with other settings that children move on to. They share information about children's assessments and progress to support continuity of learning. Staff regularly review children's progress and achievements to identify any gaps in learning. They provide support to enable gaps to close quickly.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

The highly qualified staff provide children with a range of challenging and enjoyable learning experiences. They are on hand to support children's learning, for example, staff skilfully support children as they practise their cutting skills, such as when they prepare labels for the apple sauce they have made. They talk to children about the colours they use as they design their labels. Children play cooperatively with each other as they play shopping and sit together to discuss the items they have bought. They enjoy creating their own stories from the wide range of pictures books available. Staff strengthen children's vocabulary by introducing new words as children share books with each other and with staff. Staff offer effective support to children who speak English as an additional language. They use hand gestures and sign language to strengthen children's understanding and communication skills.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Children develop a sense of community as they take part in fundraising events in the local area. They learn about living a healthy lifestyle. Staff talk to children about what food is good for them and share books as they discuss this. They enjoy the process of making their own bread for snack time. Children have daily opportunities for fresh air and outdoor play. They develop their physical skills as they climb a rope ladder and ride on bicycles. Children are given plenty of time to explore the natural environment outside, such as when they enjoy planting and playing adventures in the wooden boat. Children behave well and are kind and caring to one another. Children have many opportunities to develop their self-help skills. They take pride in their environment and relish being able to tidy up when they have finished playing and eagerly taking turns to help brush the floor.

Outcomes for children are good

Children are making good progress from their starting points. They are eager to participate in the wide range of activities offered. Children learn the skills needed in preparation for their move on to school. They enthusiastically join in with circle time and are eager to contribute their views. Children happily sing along to songs they have learned that are relevant to the winter season. They build their confidence and self-esteem by being allowed the time to explore and decide for themselves when they are ready to join in with an activity.

Setting details

Unique reference number	123589
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	1052935
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Age range of children	3 - 5
Total number of places	20
Number of children on roll	11
Name of registered person	St Albans Steiner Kindergarten Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP519056
Date of previous inspection	19 May 2016
Telephone number	07712 104510

St Albans Steiner Kindergarten was registered in 1982. It is recognised by the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship and follows the Steiner education principles. The setting employs four members of childcare staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above, including the provider who has qualified teacher status. The setting is open Monday to Friday from 9.30am until 12.30pm during term time only. It offers an extended session on a Thursday until 2.30pm and holds an open session on Fridays for parents and toddlers. The setting provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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